

Lobos, Rod

From: Gruenenfelder, Charles (ECY) <CHGR461@ECY.WA.GOV>
Sent: Wednesday, December 04, 2013 6:01 PM
To: Lobos, Rod
Cc: Schmidt, Jeremy (ECY); Beeler, Brook (ECY)
Subject: Pasco Landfill - Balefill Landfill Combustion Event
Attachments: Balefill Settlement Map.pdf; Balefill Settlement Area - closeup.JPG; Settlement Area - West Edge of Balefill.JPG

Rod,

It was good to connect with you last month when John Roland and I were down at your office visiting with Laura.

I wanted to share some important information about a situation at the Pasco Sanitary Landfill site which has recently come to our attention. We are closely monitoring a portion of the old Balefill waste section where evidence supports the conclusion that a combustion event is occurring. Currently, we do not believe the situation represents an emergency or an imminent threat to human health and safety to, residents, local businesses or site workers. We are in close, regular communication with the parties who are responsible to address this situation. Some actions to manage and reduce the confirmed combustion have already been put into place. To make sure you have relevant information I have included some additional details.

The area in question is a localized area on the western edge of the Balefill Landfill (see attached map and photos). Soil cracks and ground settling has occurred in a roughly circular area approximately 25 feet in diameter. Soil cracks are present where settling has occurred with ground surface temperatures within the center of the depression measured as high as 80-90 degrees F. Small puffs of smoke intermittently emanate from selected soil cracks. Carbon monoxide (CO) monitoring has detected levels of CO in excess of 1000 ppm within the highest temperature soil cracks.

The area has been marked off with hazard tape and stakes. The settlement area is in a relatively isolated portion of the site approximately 100 feet from the nearest interior access road and approximately 300 feet east of the Dietrich Road extension into the site. As you know, chain link fencing and locked gates limit casual trespass or access to this interior portion of the landfill site. Signage is present throughout the site indicating restricted access due to the ongoing presence of contamination and cleanup-related actions. There is no visual or olfactory evidence of this condition which would trigger recognition or concern outside the limits of the landfill property.

This confirmed combustion event is occurring close to another waste repository area (Zone A) with active soil treatment. Zone A has also had elevated subsurface soil temperatures, caused by subsurface biological activity. The potential relationship between this current Balefill combustion event and the corresponding Zone A remedial actions has not yet been determined.

We will participate in a conference call with landfill representatives on Thursday, December 5th to discuss the appropriate next steps. Consistent with our existing authority under WAC 173-340 (Model Toxics Control Act), we will continue to work closely with the responsible parties to develop a response plan which addresses this issue. We have notified the Pasco Fire Department, and they have provided notice of this situation to the Franklin County EMD and Franklin County Fire District #3. We also have notified Benton-Franklin Health Department and the DOH.

We will continue to provide you with regular updates. Please contact me at 509-329-3439 or 509-496-7021 (cell) if you have any immediate questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Chuck

Chuck Gruenenfelder, L.G.,L.Hg.

Hydrogeologist

Toxics Cleanup Program

WA State Department of Ecology

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